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pray until I get her who warms me in her broad sleeves; then I will pray; *māni mǧalli lawla' ḥaṣṣ li ḡāfi ar-rdān ṣallejt'*

LIMITATIONS ON THE CHOICE OF A WIFE

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In the choice of a wife the Rwejlī is considerably limited. He must not marry the divorced wife of his father nor her daughter, not even if she was begotten by another man. He is not allowed to marry the divorced wife of his son or his son's widow, the mother of his wife, the daughter of his brother or sister. Neither may he marry his foster sister. No member of the Eben Ša'lān kin will take to wife a daughter of the Ḥwētāt or Beni 'Atijje tribes nor allow his daughters to marry any of them. Neither the Ḥwētāt nor Beni 'Atijje are by birth equal to the Eben Ša'lān, because they paid, as late as the first half of the nineteenth century, a tax for protection, *ḡwa*, to the despised Šarārāt tribe and camped with them as their *ḡṣara*, or protected neighbors.

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No Rwejlī dares marry a member of the Šlejb, al-Ḥawāzem, al-Fhejǧāt, Šarārāt, or 'Azem tribes. All these are also called Htejm. They have their chiefs and their social organization; they live in tents and breed camels just like the other Bedouins and yet they are not held in esteem. The reason is that they pay a tax for protection, *ḡwa*; that they are neither able to protect themselves nor gain full independence. Being thus compelled to buy the protection of the more vigorous tribes they are not allowed to enter into blood relationship with their protectors. They are *ḡwān*, they pay *ḡwa*—and their sons will pay too. Their countenance, or honor, is as white as that of the Rwala, but they are not held in the same esteem. They do not live with the Bedouins as strangers, but as neighbors *ḡṣara*. If they serve them, they serve them as *fedawijje* free servants, which is not considered a disgrace because members of large Bedouin tribes also hire themselves as *fedawijje* to the more powerful chiefs.

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A Rwejlī cannot marry the daughter of a blacksmith *ṣāṣ* (pl. *ṣawāṣ*) or other mechanic who camps with the Rwala or lives in their settlements. It is said of the *ṣawāṣ* that they are no *ṣāṣ*—that is, that they have no recognized genealogy—and even that nothing is known about their true descent, as they marry newcomers from various towns.

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settlements, and tribes regardless of whether they are autonomous, free, dependent, or slaves.

Marriages with slaves are also forbidden. A man marrying a slave would be killed by his kin, *ahl*. No one dares defile the blood of his kin.

Moreover there are inequalities even among the free Arab tribes. All those belonging to the 'Anese group consider themselves aristocrats, hold the other tribes in contempt, and dislike forming matrimonial bonds with them. The children born of such wedlock often hear these ironical remarks:

"Thou wilt come to nothing, for thou art only half a Rwejlī; blood will not mix well with blood; thou wilt resemble thy mother's kin," etc.

Rights of the Eben al-'Amm

The children of parents descended from the respectable old 'Anese families are the best. Yet even here the bridegroom is not entirely free in choosing a wife, for according to the ancient custom every girl is to wed the nearest young relative whom it is permissible to marry, *eben al-'amm*. This is, generally, a son of her father's cousin; should this cousin have no sons or if the grandfather had no brothers, the girl falls to the nearest kinsman descended from the great-grandfather's brother. The *eben al-'amm* occasionally claims the girl, *jehağ-gerha*, exclusively for himself, but, even if he does not, the girl cannot marry without his consent, for it is said: "No one but the nearest kinsman can tie or untie her, 'oğdān w-ħallāħa bjed eben 'ammīħa (sic!)." Only when her father wants to marry again and gives her in exchange for his new wife, *jebaddelħa ĩnařek*, is the *eben al-'amm*'s claim null and void. On the other hand, if the girl refuses to be wedded to her *eben al-'amm*, he may kill her without becoming liable for compensation.

If the *eben al-'amm* knows that the girl will not hear of him, being already in love with someone else, he forbids the marriage and the girl grows old.

If the father of the girl claimed by her *eben al-'amm* dies and the girl loves another, she goes immediately after the father's death to the relative who claims her exclusively for himself, called in this case *ħağğēr*, and asks: "My father has passed away; I want thee to release my neck; I want thee

- 582 to release me in return for my father, who has passed away;
 584 *ana abúj ráh abrik tegúz min raḡubti abrik tedallēmi 'awáz
 abúj ráh.*" The *ḥaǧǧir* is expected to take pity on her and
 allow her freely to choose a husband for herself, but nobody
 can compel him to do so.

588 In case of his refusal there is nothing left for the girl
 684 but to elope. She flees with her youth to some distant tribe;
 583 there they put themselves under the protection of a powerful
 chief, *jinhāšīn jam al-'arab jetazabbenūnhom*. They can then
 marry and live as man and wife in the same tent but are always
 threatened with the revenge of the *eben al-'amm*. An elopement
 is punished in the same way as murder, and the thirst for
 revenge must be satisfied.

'Agāǧ al-Maēhi was in love with a Rwala girl and wanted
 to marry her. To this her *eben al-'amm* would not consent.
 After three years of hopeless love, *mutahāwīn hu w-ijjāha
 ḡalā' sīnīn*, 'Agāǧ fled with his sweetheart to the *Ahl' al-
 Semāl*, tribes camping in the neighborhood of the *Hawrān*.
 As soon as the news spread next morning that the lovers had
 escaped, *innahom minhāšīn*, the *eben al-'amm* with his kins-
 folk mounted their camels and went in pursuit of the lovers,
ḡalab. But 'Agāǧ reached his destination, was given a tent,
 and was united to the girl in marriage. His kinsfolk offered
 the pursuing relative a ransom, but the latter steadily refused.
 Leaving his tent two months afterwards, he went in search
 of 'Agāǧ, whom he found and killed with his young bride.
 Returning home, he demanded in the name of his kin from
 the kin of 'Agāǧ the blood money for seven murdered men,
 because the murder of an eloped woman, *šemāṣa*, is valued
 at that of seven men. Her lover should not have eloped with
 her, but, having done so, he should have protected her better,
 knowing the danger with which she was threatened.

If the *eben al-'amm* kills the man who has eloped with
 the girl, he pays only half of the blood money, as the eloper
 was himself the cause of his own death.

Dibān, the white slave of Megwel's family, fell in love
 with a Rwala girl, who returned his affection. Both knew
 that they could never belong to each other, for a slave, though
 white, dares not marry even the poorest Rwala woman. So
 they decided to escape to some settled country and to live in
 one of the villages there. But they were pursued and the girl
 was killed by her own brother.

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O Solejmân, my heart rebels against me,
For it is aflame with love for a stranger.
How pleasant when a woman's dress covers the hips
[of my camel]
And the plaits of our hair mingle together.

82] *Aḡnebijje* is a girl from a different, unrelated tribe. With such a one a Rwejlî is not supposed to fall in love. He did not mean to become enamored, but his heart caught fire against his will and clove to the stranger. Of this he complains to his friend Solejmân. The kin of his beloved refusing her to him, he decides to elope with her. The maiden mounted his she-camel behind the saddle, her dress, *ṣawb*, covering not only the camel's back and hips but the rider's hips as well, and in a strong wind her plaits mingled with his long hair. With the relatives of his sweetheart pursuing him, he fled to his own people, who, ignorant of the danger threatening him, could not come to his rescue.

1. *Mâ bikom alli faṣan li jā ma'āzibi*
dam'i 'ala waḡneti taṣṣi ṣwāmiha
2. *w-allāh jā low lā-l-haja la-rkab 'ala ḡibi*
w-aḡāf li direten w-aḡli laḡāliha
3. *w-anḡab ṣaḡif al-ḡaṣa w-al-ḡeḡen taṣṣi bi*
w-aḡ'ad maṣābiḡah 'an dār aḡāliha
4. *w-enti firejtini jā meṣrijat al-ḡibi*
wa-ḡrāḡe al-ḡaṣiḡe mā ḡad dara biḡa
5. *jā 'ajn 'anzen taṣaffak bel-'arāzibi*
taṣṣi maḡabb al-hawa' w-aḡ-ṣajd jaṣliha
6. *w-aḡ-ṣajd biṣāḡetek ṣaden ḡenādibi*
hi ta'teḡi bel-maḡa w-ana-'teḡi biḡa
7. *w-allāh jā low lā-n-naḡad mā ḡān taṣṣi bi*
w-allāh al-ḡeḡāḡel ḡeḡa killen ṣaradḡiḡa.

1. There is none among you who may understand me, O hosts!
For my cheeks are wet with sorrow for her.
2. By Allāh! even if I lose my life, I will surely mount
my old camel,
Search another country, and flee to the people who en-
camp there.
3. I shall steal her with the slender waist, and at night
the riding camels will escape with me,
So that I shall be far from my kin in the morning.

586 wants to marry a second time the woman whom he has divorced, her kin may ask a new *siḍk*, dowry, for her, provided he has had no children by her and she is not pregnant. If the man divorces the wife of his own accord, he is not entitled to compensation, but if the wife asks her husband: "Let me go! *ḡalleini*," he may reply: "Bring what I have paid for thee! *ḡaḡḡ-ḡi waḡḡḡ*."

593 No quarreling, words of abuse, or lamentations of married
578 couples are ever heard in the Rwala camps. A man ought never
626 to be seen beating his wife or vice versa, as by doing so they would disgrace, *'ajb ḡebir*, themselves and their respective kins for all time. Woe to them, therefore, should they do so — for then the husband's kin and the woman's kin as well as all the neighbors would come over and expel them from both the camp and the tribe. This is the reason why a man never quarrels *aloud with his wife, although he may often and thoroughly* beat her, *jeḡtelha* (or *jedebbaha*), being careful, however, that nobody shall see him. In the daytime he does so in a corner of the tent, at night in bed. The punishment is applied with the stick used in driving his camel, and that unsparingly. The wife generally covers her face with the bedquilts or presses it into the pillows to prevent even the least sound of her crying from being heard. Otherwise the man might keep on beating her still longer, and any other man might come in, on hearing her, to assist the husband. If the ill-used woman complains to her relatives, she has to return to her husband without getting any satisfaction.

593 Miḡref eben Kurdi once beat his young wife, a daughter
582 of Prince an-Nūri, for more than an hour not only over her back but over the head as well, so that it was swollen for ten days. On complaining to her father, the only satisfaction she received was that she would get still more if she did not behave herself. She was known to torment Miḡref in a hundred ways, while he repaid her with sound beatings. For no sooner was she born, than Miḡref, her second cousin, claimed her for his future wife, *ḡaḡḡarka*. When she grew up she could not bear the sight of her bridegroom-to-be, but the more she scoffed at him, the more he insisted on marrying her. Prince an-Nūri himself and his son Nawwāf also begged Miḡref to give the girl her freedom, but, appealing to his privilege as her nearest relative whom it is permissible for her to marry, *eben al-'amm*, he maintained that he would not do so before she had

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come his wife. Finally Nawwâf himself advised her to content, comforting her with the hope that Mišref would free her immediately after the wedding. Then she answered: "I shall not disregard the counsel my father and my brother give me nor act against their advice, *ana mât-la' min šawr abûj w-ašûj lâ-šalef šawfathom.*" On the wedding night she escaped from the round tent, *hefra*, and would not allow Mišref to come near her. After becoming Mišref's wife she admitted that she was in love with Mamdûh eben Sattâm and resolved to remain a virgin until she could marry him. Mišref, who loved her greatly and was now suffering not only from jealousy but also from the sneers of his friends, gave vent to his anger by beating her and swearing that he would never give her back her freedom.

A woman in fear of a beating leaves the tent and follows the first man she meets into his tent, or she may enter any tent, where she asks for protection. There she may stay as long as she pleases. Such a woman is called *za'lane*. The owner of the tent sheltering her will never ask her to leave or to return to her husband's tent. The latter will, as a rule, send some relative or servant to her. When they return to him with the information that she is inclined to be reconciled with him, he waits for her at the time of the next moving, leads her camel to his tent, where he makes it kneel, and says: "Enter the tent! (*fûti-la-l-bejâ*)" The wife obeys without further ado and takes up her work as if nothing had happened. But if the man is really angry with the woman who has run away from him to another tent he will not send her word to return to him; he ceases to care for her and pretends not to know her at all. Such a woman is to be pitied, indeed. Her husband is not obliged to feed or clothe her, because she has left him voluntarily; neither will he divorce her without receiving compensation, and her relatives are vexed with her for the disgrace she has put upon them. If she is not young and pretty, nothing is left to her but to work as a servant in some tent; if she is, she looks for some one to elope with and thus help her to freedom.

In the case of dissolutions of the marital bonds as here described it is not always easy to return to the man his wife's dowry, if he has paid it in full. For her relatives may have already divided the amount among themselves and may be unwilling to restore it or make compensation. The woman

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567 murder they avenge not only among themselves, but on the
 627 free Bedouins as well. The master who kills his slave exposes
 himself to the vengeance of the latter's kin and must pay the
 blood price. Should he refuse, the avengers place themselves
 under the protection of a more powerful slave, generally the
 head slave of a chief, who soon compels the Bedouins to assist
 him in humbling the guilty person. A slave can pursue or
 protect, *leh wağh je'addi jesaddi*, in the same manner as his
 master. Whoever hurts his protégé gains the enmity not only
 of the slave but of his whole kin, and of the slave's master
 as well, who must support the slave in order to have peace
 in the tent and his usual comforts.

501 Yet, no matter how powerful, a slave can never marry the
 daughter of even the poorest Bedouin; and, on the other hand,
 582 the least of the herdsmen would not think of marrying a slave's
 daughter. For even the poorest Bedouin is independent, *horr*,
 while the slave remains subject, *'abd*, for ever. Not even the
 members of the most despised tribes, like the Šlejb, Šarârât,
 Htejm, etc., would marry a slave. In a certain manner they
 all are *horr*, despite the low esteem in which they are held,
 and a slave remains *'abd*, no matter what power he wields.
 326 Only the sons and daughters of white blacksmiths, *sunnâ*,
 enter into blood relations with slaves. If a black slave marries
 567 a white girl, the daughter of a *şâne'*, and their son also marries
 a daughter of a *şâne'* again, the third and fourth generations
 are quite white, and yet they do not become free, *horr*, but
 always remain slaves, *'abid*. In the settlements — especially in
 the cultivated regions — the origin of such whites is some-
 times forgotten, but never among the Bedouins of the desert.

WHOLESALE MERCHANTS AND THEIR AGENTS, THE 'AKEJL

442 As the Rwala are occupied almost exclusively in camel
 breeding, it is only in exchange for camels that they can get
 grain, clothing, arms, saddles, and other necessities of life.
 The camels they sell either in the inner desert or in the settled
 territory, nearly always to the same wholesale merchants who
 live in the larger towns on the borders of Arabia as well as
 in Egypt and India. The most prominent among these is the
 Eben Bassâm family, from the settlement of Bassâm in al-
 Kaşim. Its members own large business houses at al-Başa,
 Bombay, at-Tâjef, Cairo, and Damascus. They export camels

326 sells for his own profit. When the Bedouins procure supplies of grain in the tilled territory for their stay in the inner desert, the blacksmith demands one *meğidijje* (\$0.90) on each horse in order to buy his provisions. Whoever slaughters a camel must give the blacksmith all its entrails and the shins of its hind legs.

326 No Bedouin, not even a member of despised tribes like
● 582 the Šarârât, Šlejb, Hawâzem, etc., would marry the daughter
564 of a blacksmith nor let his daughter marry him. For the *šâne*, although white, is not independent, is not *horr*.

539^x The poet was a negro accompanying a trade caravan from Irak to Prince Muḥammad eben Rašid; the reciter, 'Abdallāh al-Maṭrūd.

Verse 1. *Mezhebe* or *mezwede* are bags in which food needed on the journey is carried by the camels. 2. *Šejb al-rawāreb* are camels with gray or white hair. From continuous sweating the hair covered by the cushion on which the rider rests his feet becomes white. *Ḥaḡab* is the breast girth, a rope of camel's hair which secures the saddle. When a long fatiguing journey causes the camel to lose its hump, the saddle shifts to and fro and the breast girth with it. 3. In the settlements the host sits on a rug and leans against a cushion. 4. *'Arḡūb* is a slope, or a steep, rocky hillside. On roads leading across such slopes the merchants keep a sharp lookout for robbers who frequent such places. The camels often stumble, the loads on their backs lose their balance, and while the guides are picking up the fallen parcels, putting them back, and pushing the animals into the road again, robbers often take advantage of the disorder to make a successful attack on the caravan. Muḥammad eben Rašid cleared the slopes from this pest, thus continuing the work begun by his father, 'Abdallāh, founder of the power wielded by the Eben Rašid house. 5. The kin of Eben Rašid hails from the Zījārme clan. 7. Gathering fuel on the plains and in the mountains for the camp or town of Eben Rašid is a task left to the serfs, members of the despised clans. 8. *Ješabbeḥ*, he examines thoroughly, is used of a gazelle standing on some high point and keeping guard over the grazing flock. On sighting a suspicious object it looks at it with the same attention as the women look at Eben Rašid and the members of his family.

[554] *Mištebeḥ* is a man who claims to be highborn and who is considered as such by many people, while in reality there is a blot of some kind on his descent. No honest Bedouin, even [582] the poorest, would give him his daughter for a wife. He seeks a grandee of doubtful origin like himself and marries his daughter. 9. To the daughters of the house of Eben Rašid nothing is too costly. They can pick out at the merchant's the best and most expensive dress goods. They never suffer from hunger or thirst, and to obtain a drink of milk need not wait longingly till the herdsmen drive in the camels for watering from a distant pasture. *'Aṣīb* is a pasture from which the camels are not driven home every evening. This